

## Southwest Express

Written by Tim Black

Wednesday, 06 August 2008 01:50 - Last Updated Thursday, 14 August 2008 08:27

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Today was the first of our marathon driving days. We planned these days to be 8-9 hours of driving, but because we can't do the speed limit these days are going to take longer than that. We covered a lot of the Southwest today--from the middle of Arizona to nearly the end of New Mexico.



Public works got some culture. This was in or near the Navajo Nation.



Petrified Forest National Park.

A sign in the visitor center reads, "The bubonic plague is real." A more detailed flier in the

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Mather Campground at the Grand Canyon explained that you can get it from the animals in the park, especially the rodents. I told a ranger that was very surprising, and she said, "Don't play with the animals." Ok, you convinced me. She said they've had some occurrences in the past but not recently. The threat of death has enlivened this trip throughout; even the truck rental agreement and usage guidelines state plainly and repeatedly that a consequence of not following the instructions is "serious injury or death." Though people may live in fear of death all their lives, thanks be to God He has made a way to no longer fear it through the death of Christ as our substitute.



We're house hunting at the Puerco Pueblo.



At least it has a foundation.

Actually, the guy behind the counter in the visitor center is from Kansas and said some small towns there--including Coffeyville, which is 20 miles from Caney--are giving away [land for free](#) to attract new residents.



Indian petroglyphs. The interpretive signs show adult men chipping out the drawings, but do you really think kids didn't have a hand in it? I got my kicks out of the man-eating bird--it's straight out of Calvin and Hobbes. A great addition to our nation's artistic memory. Interesting how graffiti became worth saving.

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Can you find the petroglyphs?





Very, it's beautiful. And it's priced to 200 (they even put it in for it) but they say tons of it are stolen each

**Don't Make a Costly Mistake**



Collecting petrified wood, rocks, fossils, plants, or animals:  
**Minimum fine \$325.00**

Defacing or destroying natural features, archeological, or historic sites:  
**Minimum fine \$325.00**

Protecting your national parks is everyone's job. If you see someone break one of the park's yellow emergency phones. We can't afford to lose the t

Do NOT take a single rock, even if you're just taking it for a souvenir. It's not just the people who take, but they just

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The above are all ~~you can see~~ chunks of petrified logs lying on the floor of this valley--they are most of



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The Painted Desert in the Petrified Forest



The Teepees in the Petrified Forest.

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Gallup, New Mexico



Continental Divide, near Tularosa, NM. Canyon south of Amarillo tonight, but it's time for bed so